

- 13 -

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An apparatus for dialing a number for a communication terminal, said number being stored in a directory with a plurality of numbers, said communication terminal having a key pad for a user, said apparatus comprising:
 - an input for receiving digits entered by the user using the key pad;
 - a comparator for comparing said received digits to a plurality of directory entries stored in the directory;
 - a component for retrieving directory entries matching said received digits;
 - a display for displaying said retrieved directory entries;
 - a component for prompting the user for an additional entry in response to more than one matched directory entry being displayed;
 - a component for selecting one of the retrieved directory entries;
 - a component for dialing the number associated with the selected directory entry.
2. The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further including a counter for counting the digits received, and said comparator being responsive to said counter when a pre-determined number of digits are received.
3. The apparatus as claimed in claim 2, wherein said directory entries comprise the number and a name, said name being mapped to digits on the key pad.
4. The apparatus as claimed in claim 3, wherein said comparator includes a component for comparing said received digits to the number for each of said directory entries and a component for comparing said received digits to the digits mapped to the name for each of said directory entries.
5. The apparatus as claimed in claim 4, wherein said additional entry comprises another digit entered by the user using the key pad.

- 14 -

6. The apparatus as claimed in claim 5, wherein said additional entry comprises a navigational key entry.
7. The apparatus as claimed in claim 5, wherein said component for selecting comprises a navigational key.
8. The apparatus as claimed in claim 3, wherein the communication terminal includes one or more line keys, and said component for dialing is responsive to one of the line keys being selected by the user.
9. The apparatus as claimed in claim 2, wherein the communication terminal includes a handset, and said component for dialing is responsive to said handset being lifted by the user.
10. A method for pre-dialing a number stored in a directory for a communication terminal, said communication terminal having a key pad for a user to enter digits, said method comprising the steps of:
 - accepting one or more digits entered by the user;
 - comparing said entered digits to a plurality of entries stored in the directory;
 - retrieving entries having digits matching the digits entered by the user;
 - prompting the user for an additional input if the retrieved entries include more than one entry;
 - selecting one of the retrieved entries in response to the additional input by the user;
 - dialing the number associated with the selected entry.
11. The method as claimed in claim 10, further including the step of counting the digits received, and said step of comparing said entered digits being performed when a pre-determined number of digits are received.

- 15 -

12. The method as claimed in claim 11, wherein said additional input is provided by the user using a navigational input.

13. The method as claimed in claim 11, wherein said additional input comprises one or more digits entered by the user, and the additional digits result in a single entry matching the digits entered by the user.

14. The method as claimed in claim 13, wherein said entries comprise the number and a name, said name being mapped to digits on the key pad.

15. The method as claimed in claim 14, wherein said step of comparing includes comparing said entered digits to the number for each of said entries and comparing said entered digits to the digits mapped to the name for each of said entries.

16. The method as claimed in claim 15, wherein said step of dialing is responsive to an off-hook state in the communication terminal.

17. A system for pre-dialing a number stored in a directory for a communication terminal, said communication terminal having a key pad for a user to enter digits, said method comprising the steps of:

means for inputting one or more digits entered by the user;

means for comparing said entered digits to a plurality of entries stored in the directory;

means for retrieving entries having digits matching the digits entered by the user;

means for prompting the user for an additional input if the retrieved entries include more than one entry;

means for selecting one of the retrieved entries in response to the additional input by the user;

means for pre-dialing the number associated with the selected entry.

- 16 -

18. The system as claimed in claim 17, further including means for counting the digits received, and said means for comparing being responsive to said means for counting for comparing said entered digits when a pre-determined count is reached.

19. The system as claimed in claim 18, wherein said entries comprise the number and a name, said name being mapped to digits on the key pad.

20. The system as claimed in claim 19, wherein said means for comparing includes means for comparing said entered digits to the number for each of said entries and means for comparing said entered digits to the digits mapped to the name for each of said entries.